

*as  
could*

adjusting the feed roll's speed in response to any difference between the actual length and the target length.

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No additional fee is due for this Amendment because the number of independent claims remains unchanged and the total number of claims also remains unchanged.

#### REMARKS

Applicants' undersigned attorney thanks the Examiner for his comments. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this patent application, particularly in view of the above Amendment and the following remarks. Currently, Claims 1, 8, 10-16, and 23-26 are under consideration.

The present invention is directed to a closed-loop system that maintains a pre-set cut length of an elastic material, such as a stretch bonded laminate, as the material is cut and placed on a web, taking into account changes in the elastic properties of the material. The system has the ability to measure the cut length, compare the average cut length to a target cut length, and to adjust web tension or feed roll speed to achieve the target cut length. Also, in a preferred embodiment of the system, the system is able to maintain the web tension at a minimum to reduce cut length variation, and adjust the feed roll speed to achieve the target cut length.

#### Amendment to the Drawings

Fig. 1 has been amended to include numerals 36a and 36b, indicating the two parts of the web guide 36. The revisions to Fig. 1 are marked in red on the amended figure.

#### Amendment to the Specification

The specification has been amended at page 6, line 1, to include reference to numerals 36a and 36b, reflecting the changes in Fig. 1. The specification has been further amended at page 6, line 11, by changing "detected" to "detected/measured," as suggested by the Examiner.

#### Amendment to the Claims

Applicants have amended Claims 1, 14, and 15 to overcome the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112. Amended Claims 1, 14, and 15 are

included herein. Marked-up versions of amended Claims 1, 14, and 15 are included at the end of this document. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

### **Claim Rejections - 35 USC §112**

The rejection of Claims 1, 8, 10-16, and 23-26 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention is respectfully traversed.

Applicants have amended Claims 1 and 15 to clarify that the step of "cutting a piece of material" is being performed by the previously recited cut-off module. Support for this amendment is found on page 6, lines 6-7, of the specification.


Applicants have amended Claim 14 to clarify that the web tension is being kept to a minimum. Support for this amendment is found on page 3, lines 3-5, of the specification.

For at least the reasons given above, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claims 1, 14, and 15 are not indefinite. Since Claims 8 and 10-13 depend from amended Claim 1, and Claims 16 and 23-26 depend from amended Claim 15, these claims are also not indefinite. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

### **Conclusion**

Applicants believe that this case is now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner feels that any issues remain, then Applicants' undersigned attorney would like to discuss the case with the Examiner. The undersigned can be reached at (847) 490-1400.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE  
IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

At page 5, line 15 – page 6, line 5:

Between the first driving device 28 and a second driving device 32, the material 22 is guided around a dancer roll 30 as a means to control the tension between the two driving devices 28, 32. Between the dancer roll 30 and the second driving device 32, the material 22 is guided around a couple of stationary rolls 31. After passing over the second driving device 32, the material 22 is directed around a tension measuring device 34, and the amount of tension in the material 22 is measured at that point. The material 22 then makes its way around a web guide 36, shown as a two-part device 36a and 36b, to a feed roll 38. The web guide 36 is used to control the positioning of the material 22 along a cross-direction of the process. For the purposes of the present invention, the cross-direction lies generally within the plane of the material 22 being transported through the process and is aligned perpendicular to the machine direction. The machine direction is indicated by arrows 40 in Fig. 1.

At page 6, lines 6-17:

From the feed roll 38, the material 22 is fed into a cut-off module 42 where the material is cut into pieces 44 of discrete length. The cut-off module 42 includes a nip roll 41, an anvil roll 43, and one or more cutting mechanisms (e.g. blades 45) on either the nip roll 41 or the anvil roll 43 for cutting the elastic material 22 into pieces 44 of predetermined length. Once the material 22 is cut, the discrete length of the pieces 44 of the material is [detected] detected/measured by a detection system 48 either on the anvil roll 43 or after the pieces 44 are transferred to a second web 46. The preferred location for the detection system 48 is as close to the cut-off module 42 as possible to minimize lag time in the system 20. A transfer device 50, or the anvil roll 43, can be used to transfer the pieces 44 from the cut-off module 42 to the second web 46. The transfer device 50 can be either a transfer roll or a conveyor. Similarly, the second web 46 can be either a web or a conveyor.

**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE  
IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Amended) A process for cutting a material into pieces having a predetermined target length, comprising the steps of:

- feeding a continuous web of the material from a feed roll to a cut-off module;
- measuring tension in the web;
- [cutting] using the cut-off module to cut a piece of the material from the continuous web;
- measuring an actual length of the piece of material;
- comparing the actual length of the piece of material to the target length; and
- adjusting the tension in the web prior to the web encountering the feed roll in response to any difference between the actual length and the target length.

14. (Amended) The process of Claim 1 wherein the tension-adjusting step includes the step of modulating the web tension such that the web tension is kept to a minimum.

15. (Amended) A process for cutting a material into pieces having a predetermined target length, comprising the steps of:

- feeding a continuous web of the material from a feed roll to a cut-off module;
- measuring tension in the web prior to the web encountering the feed roll;
- [cutting] using the cut-off module to cut a piece of the material from the continuous web;
- measuring an actual length of the piece of material;
- comparing the actual length of the piece of material to the target length; and

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adjusting the feed roll's speed in response to any difference between the actual length and the target length.

Not approved  
10/1/02

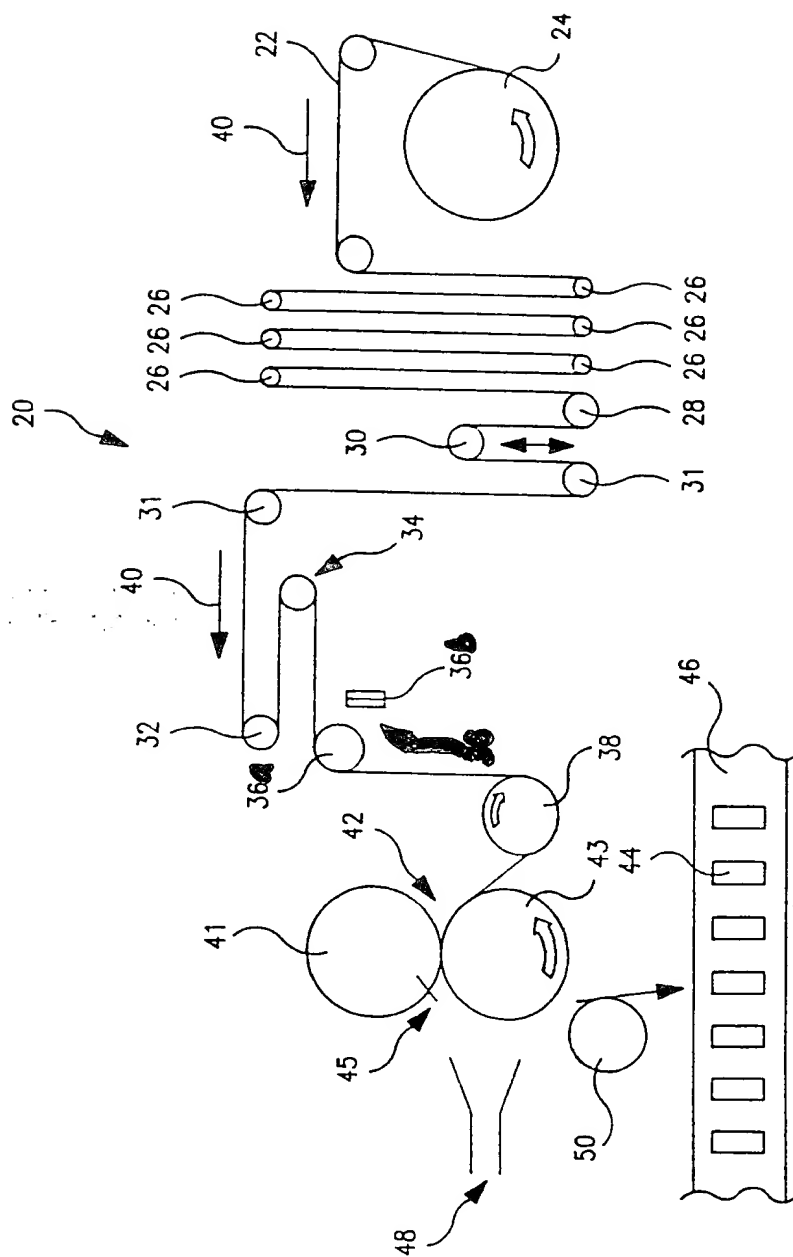


FIG. 1